

ACIS - 1188/85
2 April 1985

NOTE FOR: DCI
DDCI ~~A~~

FROM:

C/ACIS

STAT

This is FYI.

At a meeting today of the Verification Committee, Richard Perle handed me a copy of a speech he gave in London on 19 March regarding SDI. A copy is attached. You will find it interesting.

STAT

I will be able to tell you more about this and other SCC questions at the end of tomorrow's meeting of the Senior Arms Control Group.

If I can do more to help you here, please call.

STAT

cc: DDI



C134

Remarks by
RICHARD PERLE
Assistant Secretary of Defense,
to the
Committee for the Free World
Beyond 1984 Conference
London, 19 March 1985

I am pleased and honored to have been asked to address this distinguished gathering and to come together with so many good friends. It is a particular pleasure to be in the company of those of you whom I know, by what you have said and written and done, as allies in the great cause of freedom.

As I listened to Vladimir Bukovsky at lunch I was reminded of a cartoon that appeared in the New Yorker some years ago. It depicted a scene from the American West -- New Mexico or perhaps Nevada -- of a broad mesa on either side of a vast valley. On one side there was an Indian, huddled over a camp fire, sending a wispy smoke signal into the air. On the distant side of the valley there loomed a large, mushroom-shaped cloud. The Indian turns to his companion and says, "I wish I'd said that."

I want to speak tonight about security -- about the strategic relationship between East and West, President Reagan's strategic defense initiative, and about arms control. I should say at the outset that I am moved to do so after having read Sir Geoffrey Howe's speech and The Times leader commenting on it.

Consideration of the complex issues of peace and security by which we in the West are challenged, intellectually as well as politically, requires more than ordinary clarity and discipline when the Soviet Union unveils a new leader. We have heard much of that last night and today, and far too little of it beyond these rooms. We have been well advised to remember the fundamentals that are so easily obscured by the euphoria to which the West is so easily given. Of these fundamentals Orwell had much to say. I will quote him only once. "The Soviet Union is a place where yesterday's weather can be changed by decree."

To the euphoria, western politicians have had much to contribute. Consider this statement from Denis Healey about the new General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: "Emotions flicker over a face of unusual sensitivity like summer breezes on a pond." And this from a former Minister of Defense who has, on more than one occasion, called your humble speaker "the prince of darkness." Without meaning in any way to comment on internal British politics, let me just say that Britain is a place where yesterday's minister can be changed by sheer glee -- and the decline of the Labor Party.

Last Friday the British Foreign Secretary spoke to the Royal United Services Institute about the military relationship between East and West, the evolution of strategic forces and policy in the decade and a half following the arms control agreements of 1972 and about the American strategic defense initiative.

It was a speech that proved again an old axiom of geometry: that length is no substitute for depth. For in a mere 27 pages he succeeded in rewriting the recent history of the Soviet-American strategic relationship, rendering it unrecognizable to anyone who has charted its course; in mistaking the unfulfilled promise of 1972 with the reality that followed; in questioning -- in a manner that is both tendentious and obliquely declaratory -- the strategic defense program of the United States; in declaring that our best hope lies in "a balance of capability matched by mutual confidence about intentions," while warning against "raising hopes that it may be impossible to fulfill."

I should have thought that, in all of that, room might have been found for a sentence, or even a phrase, on the implications of the enlarging pattern of Soviet violations of the most important arms control agreements that exist between the United States and the Soviet Union. Yet on this the speech is silent.

In what may earn its place as the understatement of 1985 on the unrelenting build-up of Soviet nuclear forces, Sir Geoffrey observes that "We know that historical experience has inclined them towards over-insurance." I must say that, even in this city of Lloyd's, I find the concept of insurance a less than persuasive description of Soviet strategic weapons programs -- programs that have resulted in the addition to their arsenal of more than 8,000 strategic warheads since we first met at the negotiating table in 1969, 4,000 of which have been deployed since the second SALT agreement was signed in 1979.

Surely there is something deeper behind the Soviet drive to amass nuclear weapons on a scale that Sir Geoffrey himself says goes "far beyond the reasonable requirements necessary for the defence of the Soviet Union." But on this too the speech is silent. And while the speech takes pains to reiterate President Reagan's statement that the United States is not seeking military superiority, it nowhere even poses the question of whether the same might be said of the Soviet Union.

Sir Geoffrey evidently believes that in signing the ABM Treaty in 1972 the Soviet Union "...reflected the agreement that there could be no winner in a nuclear conflict and that it was a dangerous illusion to believe that we could get round this reality." And he goes on to say that "The net effect (of the ABM Treaty) was ... to enhance the strategy of nuclear deterrence through the clear recognition of mutual vulnerability."

While I believe that this is a fair characterization of the thinking that attended the ABM Treaty on the American side, I can find no persuasive evidence that this view is held by the military or political leaders of the Soviet Union. Indeed, such evidence as there is suggests that the Soviets hold a quite different view, that they have never accepted the notion that it is desirable to remain vulnerable to nuclear retaliation. The massive build-up of strategic weapons in the aftermath of the ABM Treaty strongly suggests that the Soviets have all along

sought to acquire the capacity to destroy with offensive weapons the retaliatory forces of the United States and our British and French allies. The deployment of their offensive ballistic missiles, in numbers and of a quality that greatly exceeds parity with the United States, can have no plausible purpose other than to menace the American deterrent.

The growth of Soviet air defenses, which now consist of more than 13,000 launchers for surface-to-air missiles and a formidable array of radars and interceptors, hardly suggests that the Soviets are content to permit American strategic bombers to reach their targets in retaliation. And the investment the Soviets have made, and continue to make, in all forms of anti-ballistic missile defense, including precisely those technologies that are encompassed in the American strategic defense research program, could hardly be consistent with a policy of benign acquiescence in the doctrine of mutual assured destruction.

On this latter point, Soviet policy with respect to strategic defense, there is an underlying hypocrisy of Orwellian dimensions. Some 10 days after President Reagan outlined his plan for research aimed at establishing whether a strategic defense is feasible, there appeared, in Pravda and elsewhere, a statement deploring the devotion of scientific talent and resources to the development of military systems and defensive systems in particular. It was signed by a long list of Soviet scientists. Among the signers were the man in charge of the Soviet strategic defense program, the designer of the most lethal Soviet strategic missiles, the head of the Soviet military laser program, the architect of the ABM system now deployed around Moscow, and several dozen of their collaborators.

I believe that there is a far simpler explanation for the Soviet interest in the ABM Treaty of 1972 than the one suggested by the Foreign Minister. Simpler and more sinister. In 1972, when the United States had begun the deployment of a limited ABM system incorporating what was then state-of-the-art technology, the Soviets were far behind technologically. So far behind, in fact, that they were then unable to deploy a system even approaching ours. And they were certainly in no position to contemplate a crash effort without slowing the massive build-up of offensive weapons to which they were by then already committed.

So they did the obvious thing. They agreed to ban ABM systems while planning to accelerate their own research and development. They halted the American program, the deployment of which had begun; and they used the opportunity the treaty afforded to develop their own. Today the Soviets are ahead of the United States in the deployment and technology of strategic defenses. In 1985 the Soviets have in place more of the large phased-array radars on which a nation-wide ABM system might be based than the United States planned to deploy for the system we abandoned in 1972. Twice as many. And among these there is the radar now under construction near Krasnoyarsk, a radar that

blatantly and unapologetically violates the ABM Treaty that Sir Geoffrey calls "... a political and military keystone in the still shaky arch of security we have constructed with the East over the past decade and a half.

In Geneva the Soviets will doubtless continue to press for another agreement like the ABM Treaty of 1972, insisting that the United States abandon its current program of research. They know that an agreement restricting our research and theirs would be unverifiable -- and therefore unilateral. They have every reason -- nostalgia among them -- to wish to return to a situation in which they alone can carry forward, while we accept a negotiated and one-sided paralysis for however long the Soviets might require to develop their own SDI. Having learned from the past I can assure that we will not agree; we will not make the same mistake again.

There is another point to be made about the ABM Treaty and the agreement to which it was linked -- the interim agreement on offensive arms. The understanding that we thought had been reached in 1972 was that we could safely refrain from deploying an ABM system of which we were capable because the Soviets had agreed to restrictions on the growth of their offensive forces that would obviate the requirement for that system of defense. But through a variety of devices, beginning, I must say, with skillful negotiating on the part of the Soviet negotiators and rather less skillful on the part of our own, and ultimately including out-and-out violations of those agreements, the Soviets have succeeded, despite our hopes, in deploying an offensive force of a size and character even larger than that we envisioned when we decided it was necessary to deploy an anti-ballistic missile defense to protect against an offense of those dimensions.

The Soviets did rather more than that. We are all familiar -- having survived the difficult debate in Europe over the deployment of the SS-20 -- with that weapon system. It is, not many people recognize, a product of that very SALT I agreement of 1972. The 1972 agreement limited the number of launchers for ballistic missiles with a range greater than 5500 kilometers. So the Soviet Union did the obvious thing: they took a three-stage missile then in their inventory that had a range greater than 5500 kilometers, called the SS-16. They removed one of the three stages, thereby reducing its range to approximately 5,000 kilometers. And free from any treaty restraint or limitation, they began to deploy the SS-20. We now face over 400 SS-20s, each with three warheads, deployed against every conceivable target in Europe. Indeed there are rather more SS-20 warheads than there are targets. And finally, as I indicated, the Soviets began a process -- initially rather tentatively and, more recently, rather open and blatant -- of violating the provisions of that agreement. I can't help but think that the more recent and blatant violations have something to do with the failure to respond earlier to the more subtle and arguable violations.

The "shaky arch of security" to which Sir Geoffrey refers is perhaps best expressed by the trend in the military balance of the last two decades -- a trend that steadily diminished the capacity of the United States and its allies to deter hostile Soviet activity, thereby limiting the risks the Soviets would assume in exploiting opportunities for aggression and subversion.

Let me cite a few examples of the different US and Soviet trends in weapons development over the past two decades. The last of our B-52 bombers rolled off the production line in 1962 -- 23 years ago; and some of our active fleet of strategic bombers were built as far back as 1956. We began deploying our newest land-based intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) 15 years ago. During the same year, we began deploying the POSEIDON submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM). We did not field another new strategic system until 1978, when we began deploying the TRIDENT I SLBM. Since then we have begun to deploy air- and sea-launched cruise missiles, and to build the TRIDENT I ballistic missile-carrying submarine (SSBN) at the rate of about one a year.

By contrast the Soviet Union since 1971 has deployed at least three and probably four new types of ICBMs (the SS-17, SS-18, SS-19 and probably the SS-16), eight improved versions of existing ICBMs, five new types of SSBNs, four new types of SLBMs, five improved versions of existing SLBMs, long-range cruise missiles, and a new intercontinental bomber. And the Soviet Union is continuing to develop new strategic weapons of all types.

It is often said of the Soviets that they are conservative and disinclined to take risks. With this assessment I agree. But curiously, the view of the Soviets as averse to risk-taking is frequently put forward as a reason why the United States need not carry out its defense modernization and rearmament program. With this I most strenuously disagree.

For there is a clear relationship between our military potential and the willingness of the Soviet Union to take risks. Soviet perception of our willingness to defend our interests and those of our allies will depend on their assessment of the military balance. The Soviet Union took actions in the 1970s that it would not have taken in the 1960s. Such actions were less risky for the Soviets in the mid- and late-1970s because the military balance had substantially changed in their favor.

It is the nature of the military relationship that determines, above all else, whether a course is risky for the Soviets, or safe. Until the presidency of Ronald Reagan the Soviets had become accustomed to riskless adventure and subversion. The importance of the President's action in Grenada was that it marked the end of an era in which the Soviet leadership, emboldened by the declining strength and will of the United States, could engage in aggression and subversion with little or no fear that they would elicit an American response.

The President's election signaled a clear consensus on the part of the American people that something needed to be done immediately to redress the serious imbalance created by an ambitious Soviet military build-up coupled with US restraint in the 1970s. It is my strong belief that the American people continue to share that concern and assessment. They overwhelmingly support the President's commitment to continue upgrading US military capabilities in order to meet the enlarged Soviet threat and to restore the adequacy of US and allied deterrent capabilities.

I must say I find patronizing and absurd this suggestion, now fashionable among editorialists and columnists who have never shared the President's clear and forthright judgment about the Soviet Union, that Ronald Reagan will now embrace the demonstrably false theory of detente of the 1970s in order to assure his "place in history". That theory of detente, in which the Soviets were to be adroitly enmeshed in a web of relationships, expressed in terms of agreements across a broad range of political, cultural, economic and military relationships, will doubtless earn its own place in history -- as an experiment that failed.

For when the haze that surrounded the detente policy of the early and mid-1970s was dissipated by the winds of Soviet internal repression, subversion in the third-world, war in Afghanistan, technological espionage on a grand scale and unprecedented military programs, it became clear that it was we, and not the Soviets, who became enmeshed in a web of unrealistic expectations, commercial greed, self-imposed inhibitions on the President's freedom to protect our security -- and military vigilance diminished, along with shrinking defense budgets, to a dangerous indifference.

Twice in his speech Sir Geoffrey found it necessary to declare the seriousness with which Her Majesty's Government regard the effort to negotiate arms control agreements with the Soviet Union. That is a sentiment we share; although I must say that the frequency with which we feel obliged to reiterate the point is its own testimony to the propaganda, Soviet and domestic, that surrounds the issue of arms control.

I welcome the opportunity this occasion affords me to comment on the subject of arms control -- a subject the discussion of which is in danger of deteriorating into an exchange of epithets between "good guys" and "bad guys". And as one of those officials who is so often placed in the latter category by those who feel themselves firmly in the former one, a chance to explain where we differ -- and to do so in my own words and not the words of others so airily attributed to me -- is a rare privilege indeed.

I believe that the principal difference between the American Administration and its critics on the subject of arms control lies in the standard we each set for the reaching of agreement. I confess that I believe we set a higher standard than our detractors: we are searching for arms control agreements that will significantly constrain the growth of Soviet military power, while limiting our own proportionately.

We are searching for negotiated arms limitations which, if agreed to, would provide for greater stability at sharply lower levels of weapons. We are trying, as our Congress has directed, to obtain agreements that are based upon the principle of equality between the United States and its main adversary, the Soviet Union. We are attempting to achieve agreements that are sufficiently precise so that we can verify compliance with them. And in attempting all this we are mindful that there are some agreements that are better than others; all too many that convey the appearance -- but not the reality -- of militarily meaningful restraint; and some that are worse than none at all.

Our efforts to achieve agreements that are militarily significant, drawn with precision, balanced and equitable and verifiable are taking place against a background of anxiety, here and abroad, that clouds our vision and complicates our task.

The most prominent expression of this anxiety is found in the two words "arms race," and in the awesome image these words conjure in our minds -- an image of the endless piling of weapon upon weapon, an ever upward spiral without end, a race to the apocalypse. Yet the reality is more mundane, and quite elusive. It is this: the United States has today, deployed worldwide, some 8,000 fewer nuclear weapons than we had deployed in the later half of the 1960s. For fifteen years or more we have engaged in a sustained program of unilateral arms reductions while the Soviet Union has been adding constantly to its arsenal of strategic and theater nuclear weapons. Calculated in terms of megatonnage the reduction of US forces is even more impressive: we have reduced the megatonnage of our deployed weapons by 75 percent over the last two decades.

But what has this to do with arms control? Nothing -- and everything. Nothing because the US reductions, and the Soviet increases, have proceeded without regard to the three major treaties under which we and the Soviets have been living since 1972. Everything because the irrelevance of the treaties meant to regulate the competition in strategic weapons has become increasingly clear as the Soviet build-up has occurred, largely within their provisions. Indeed, it is striking how nostalgia for the arms control of the early 1970s has become an almost automatic response to current concerns about "the upward spiral of the arms race" -- as though the agreements of the 1970s were not now in effect when in fact they are. Every strategic weapon added to the arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union since 1972 has been added under the terms (sometimes interpreted generously by the Soviets) of one treaty in force, one expired but still observed, and one never ratified but adhered to nevertheless. So much for nostalgia; it ain't what it used to be.

In all of the confusion that surrounds the subject of arms control there is none so serious as the issue of seriousness. It has become commonplace for the Administration's critics to accuse it of a lack of seriousness about arms control. In support

of this accusation there are learned journalistic excursions into the bureaucratic world of the heroic but ineffective "good guys" (who are serious about arms control) and the dominant "bad guys" (who are secretly opposed to arms control, and block it at every turn, but go through the motions in a false show of seriousness). And by some obscure litmus test we are -- all of us -- herded into one camp or the other.

But what does seriousness in arms control mean? Is it a sign of seriousness to make concessions to the Soviet desire to accumulate and preserve significant advantages in nuclear weapons? Is the ease with which we abandon our objectives and make "progress" toward an agreement -- any agreement -- a sign of seriousness? Is there any relationship between seriousness and the content of the agreements we seek to negotiate?

The charge that this Administration is not serious about arms control because it has set a standard for agreement that is difficult to achieve precisely because it is worth achieving, is damaging and unworthy -- damaging to our efforts and unworthy of those who make the charge.

The burden of advice we are receiving from many of our critics amounts to little more than that we should modify our proposals so as to permit the Soviets to retain a vastly larger strategic arsenal than the levels the Administration has proposed.

According to this view, seriousness is to be found on the side of the big guns -- or, in this case, the big missiles. Demand too much restraint on the part of the Soviets, even though the levels we have proposed would be equal for both sides -- and you are not serious. Hold out for an agreement worthy of our children's respect (and with some chance of protecting their safety and liberty) and you are not serious. Seriousness resides with those who don't worry too much about the terms of an agreement as long as something gets signed.

That is, needless to say, not our view of what constitutes being serious about arms control. In our view seriousness requires clear-sighted objectives, militarily significant outcomes, agreements that are equal and verifiable -- and the patience and courage to achieve results. It can't be done quickly or easily. Our adversaries won't permit it. They prefer to wait for terms more to their liking -- terms which, like those to which they have become accustomed, leave their military programs largely unimpeded and their build-up undiminished.

With the new Soviet leader in place, it will not be long before we hear the charge emanating from Geneva that we are not serious.

I rather suspect that the Soviets in Geneva will propose that we stop research on strategic defense; that we freeze our strategic forces; that we freeze the deployment of intermediate missiles in Europe: in short, that we stop where we are, enshrining

for the Soviet Union the advantages they have achieved, the results of years of their build-up, leaving the United States, when it is now poised to regain the balance on which our security depends, unable to complete our program.

I hope and trust that this Administration will not yield to the pressures and the temptations to do that, that we will be fortified in our efforts to remain serious about arms control by gatherings like this and by the contribution that the people in this room make to the battle of ideas, without which none of these programs would mean very much or be brought to fruition.

So let me thank you for holding this meeting and for the work that so many of you are doing, and for the chance to speak to you tonight.